



City of New Bedford
Scott W. Lang, Mayor

City of New Bedford
Office of the Mayor
Contact: Elizabeth Treadup
(508) 979-1410
Elizabeth.Treadup@ci.new-bedford.ma.us

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P R E S S R E L E A S E

City of New Bedford Awarded Historic Preservation Grant

New Bedford, Massachusetts- Secretary of the Commonwealth, William Francis Galvin acting in his role as Chairman of the Massachusetts Historical Commission, recently announced that the City of New Bedford has been selected for a matching grant allocation of \$30,000 from the Massachusetts Historic Commission's Round 13: Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund pending reauthorization of the capital accounts and the availability of sufficient allocated funds. This year's highly competitive round of funding received seventy-nine applications with New Bedford being selected as one of eighteen recipients.

The Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund (MPPF) is a state-funded 50% reimbursable matching grant program available to municipalities and nonprofit organizations for the restoration and rehabilitation of significant historic properties, landscapes, sites, structures, and objects. This fund was established in 1984 to support the preservation of the historic cultural resources owned by nonprofit or municipal entities to ensure their continued use and integrity.

New Bedford will use its funding for the preparation of a historic structure report that will develop a set of technical plans and specifications for the restoration and rehabilitation of New Bedford's City Hall. Integral to preservation planning, a historic structure report is prepared prior to the commencement of any restoration, rehabilitation or upgrades. This report will ensure that the history, significance, and condition of the property are thoroughly understood and the information obtained from this report will better define the goals of the preservation plan and assess and document the existing conditions, establish a scope of work, as well as a preliminary timeline and budget for the proposed work.

Located in the center of historic downtown, within the Central New Bedford Historic District and in the hub of an art, business and retail district, City Hall retains its prominence as an iconic local landmark. For close to one hundred years it has served the municipal needs of the citizens, but additionally along with the library, City Hall is the

defining structure that comprises what is known as “City Hall Square”, which has continuously been the backdrop to a wide variety of community celebrations. However, for this brick and brownstone Renaissance Revival structure to continue to serve its citizens for the next century, extensive physical improvements and modifications must take place. Mayor Scott Lang has endorsed a strategic plan that has been developed to transform City Hall into a true Citizens Center. This plan will provide additional and enhanced public spaces, improved physical accessibility as well as provide greater access to public records, and restore the interior and exterior of the building, while updating its mechanical systems.

The preservation and restoration of City Hall supports and enhances the ongoing revitalization and economic development initiatives taking place by the private sector in the downtown. As part of the first phase of an extensive preservation effort, the historic structure report will coincide with the city’s commitment to respect, maintain and remain good stewards of their significant historical resources and would ensure a continued productive and enhanced use of City Hall for future generations.

Anne Louro, the Historic Preservation Planner for the City of New Bedford, will manage the project and can be contacted at 508-979-1488.

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